



To :
Mme Nicole Bricq
Ministre du Commerce Extérieur
Télédoc 151
139, rue de Bercy
75572 Paris Cedex 12

Subject : Social and environmental impacts of Eramet's Weda Bay nickel and cobalt mining project in Indonesia

Jakarta and Montreuil, June 20th, 2013

Dear Minister,

We are writing concerning Eramet's nickel and cobalt mining project in protected areas in Halmahera Island, Indonesia.

Walhi (Friends of the Earth Indonesia) and Les Amis de la Terre France have been working to assess the social and environmental impacts of the Weda Bay project, and are supporting the demands of local communities affected by Eramet's current and planned operations. In this framework, Eramet won the Pinocchio Award in November 2010.

Abednego Tarigan, director of Walhi, is currently in Paris to make the voices of Indonesian communities heard.

In the past, you have personally denounced the social and environmental impacts of extractive industries: you strongly opposed the development of shale gas in France when you were a Senator, and you suspended Shell offshore permit in Guyane one year ago, when you were Minister of Ecology. Les Amis de la Terre knew you for this commitment to defend social and environmental justice, also through your work on tax issues.

As a consequence, we were very surprised and disappointed to see that, since you are Minister of Foreign Trade, you have been repeatedly defending Eramet operations in Indonesia - as well as Total offshore project in this country -, in particular in July 2012 when you met with Jero Wacik, Indonesian Minister of energy and mineral resources, and two weeks ago during your travel to Indonesia.

We are deeply concerned by the social and environmental impacts of the Weda Bay mining project. The French state is a shareholder of Eramet, and as such, it is also responsible for the negative impacts of the operations of this company worldwide.

We have also just sent a letter to Eramet to share our concerns, you will find it attached.

Expected impacts of the Weda Bay project on peoples, the environment and climate

Halmahera Island is located in the middle of the Wallacea zone. Long isolation and complexity of forming Halmahera Island have given interesting phenomena of fauna variety that live in this area. Most of the fauna and flora in this island still need to be researched and identified, but current information reveal a high-level of species endemism. About 80 percent of Halmahera forest has not been yet explored. The uniqueness of this area derives from a complex geological history which permitted the mixture of Asian and Australian species to occur.

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Our organizations consider that this unique biodiversity hotspot would be heavily and irreversibly impacted by Eramet's operations. Indeed, the mining zone consists of 45.8 percent of protected forest (25,118 Hectares). The deforestation impacts that Eramet foresees are clearly under-estimated and the areas to be cleared that are in the protection forests (for exploration or later activities) are not quantified. It is also very important to notice that the Aketawaje section of the Aketajawe-Lolobata National Park is within 4km of the project area, and the project would destroy the forest corridor between this section and the Lolobata section of the Park. This will result in "*long-term habitat loss for a number of species endemic to Halmahera and North Moluku, including species protected under international and Indonesian law, and Endangered and Vulnerable species*"¹, such as the Chattering Lory and the Asian Box Turtle.

Moreover, this tropical forest is a carbon sink, playing an important role of carbon storage and sequestration. This mining project will thus affect this function of the forest, inducing indirect carbon emissions. These worrying and irreversible climate impacts are not considered in the environmental impact assessment and are contrary to the French government's commitment in the fight against climate change.

Although Eramet is part of the BBOP (Business and Biodiversity Offsets Programme), Walhi and Les Amis de la Terre consider that compensation schemes, especially concerning biodiversity, are not the right solution, and do not permit to avoid biodiversity losses. Besides, these compensation programs do not take into account the social function of the forests, and the rights of forest peoples.

Most important, the Weda Bay project will bring negative impacts to the livelihood of indigenous people who live in traditional manner. These people rely on nature courtesy for their basic live such as sago tree for food, and pristine river. The area of the mining project is located in "Indigenous People Forest", land that belong to these communities, as recognized by the Indonesian Constitutional Court. On several opportunities, the Sawai and Togutil communities have protested to express their opposition to the development of mining operations in Halmahera island, and one villager has even been arrested and sentenced to jail for nine months for defending his land. In Eramet's own documents, it is acknowledged that the project is getting critical response from community. Thus, we consider that the Weda Bay project is violating the principle of Free, Prior and Informed Consent, recognized in international standards such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

For all these reasons, Walhi and Les Amis de la Terre ask you to request Eramet to cancel immediately the Weda Bay mining plan in this protected area, to save biodiversity, climate, environment and peoples in Halmahera Island, and the world. With your actions so far, you have been defending Eramet's interests at the expense of the peoples, climate and the environment. Our organizations hope that you will have the courage to renew with the values and ideas you once defended in the past.

Thank you in advance for your response.

Sincerely,



Abednego Tarigan
Director

Walhi / Friends of the Earth Indonesia



Martine Laplante
President

Les Amis de la Terre France

1 Earthworks, Weda Bay Nickel Review Report, "Supplemental Biodiversity Review of Weda Bay Nickel Project", July 2010, p. 6.

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